

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05

H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15

NSCE-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 SSO-00 /073 W

-----071718 282000Z /66

O 281750Z JUN 78

FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 1534

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY GABORONE IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LAGOS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 PRETORIA 3646

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDEV, SF, WA

SUBJECT: NAMIBIA: SAG RESPONSE TO DEMARCH OF JUNE 22

REF: PRETORIA 3510

FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF THE SAG'S RESPONSE TO THE
MESSAGE FROM THE FIVE WESTERN FOREIGN MINISTERS TO
FOREIGN MINISTER BOTHA AND THE TALKING POINTS MADE BY
THE PRETORIA FIVE ON JUNE 22.

1. IN THEIR LETTER DATED 22 JUNE 1978, ADDRESSED TO THE
SOUTH AFRICAN FOREIGN MINISTER, THE FOREIGN MINISTERS
OF CANADA, THE UNITED KINGDOM, FRANCE, THE UNITED STATES
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OF AMERICA, AND THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY, STATED
THAT THEY BELIEVED THAT THEY WERE VERY CLOSE TO A SETTLE-
MENT IN SOUTH WEST AFRICA AND CONSIDERED THAT IT WOULD BE
TRAGIC IF, AFTER 15 MONTHS OF CONCENTRATED AND COOPERATIVE
EFFORT, WE ALLOWED A SOLUTION TO ELUDE US. THEY REITERATED
THAT THEY BELIEVED THAT THEIR PROPOSAL PROVIDED AN EFFECTIVE
AND PRAGMATIC BASIS FOR BRINGING ABOUT AN INTERNATIONALLY

ACCEPTABLE SOLUTION.

2. THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT SHARES THESE VIEWS AND IN FACT DURING THE RECENT PAST HAS CONSISTENTLY URGED THE FIVE TO MOVE FORWARD FIRMLY AND SPEEDILY TO IMPLEMENT THEIR PROPOSAL.

3. WHEN THE AMBASSADORS ON 22 JUNE 1978 ELABORATED ON THE ABOVE MENTIONED COMMUNICATION OF THEIR FOREIGN MINISTERS THEY POINTED OUT THAT CERTAIN ACTIONS TAKEN BY SOUTH AFRICAN SUBSEQUENT TO ACCEPTING THE PROPOSAL HAD HINDERED THEIR EFFORTS TO OBTAIN ACCEPTANCE OF THE PROPOSAL BY OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES. THE ACTIONS MENTIONED WERE "THE CASSINGA RAID, THE ARREST OF SWAPO MEMBERS INSIDE NAMIBIA AND THE INITIATION OF THE PROCESS OF ELECTORAL REGISTRATION".

4. THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT WISHES TO REMIND THE FIVE THAT THE ACTION TAKEN AGAINST TERRORIST BASES ON 4 MAY 1978 WAS NECESSITATED BY A RAPID AND SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE IN VIOLENCE AND TERRORIST ACTIVITIES BY SWAPO INCLUDING THE GROWING AND EXPLICIT THREAT TO THE LIVES OF POLITICAL LEADERS IN THE TERRITORY AFTER SOUTH AFRICA'S ACCEPTANCE OF PROPOSAL. INDEED, THE LEADER OF SWAPO OPENLY PUBLICISED HIS INTENTION TO STEP UP HIS ARMED ACTIVITIES AND SWAPO PRIDED ITSELF ON CONTINUING AND EXPANDING ITS CONFIDENTIAL

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ATTACKS. IN VIEW OF SWAPO'S FAILURE TO ACCEPT THE PROPOSAL DURING THE THREE-MONTH PERIOD AFTER THEIR FORMAL PRESENTATION COUPLED WITH THE ACTS AND THREATS OF INCREASED VIOLENCE, SOUTH AFRICA WOULD HAVE BEEN FULLY JUSTIFIED IF IT WERE TO REQUEST A RECONSIDERATION OF SOME OF THE PROVISIONS OF THE PROPOSAL, PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATING TO THE SECURITY OF THE CIVILIAN POPULATION. THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT HAS THUS FAR REFRAINED FROM DOING SO IN ORDER NOT TO MAKE THE TASK OF THE FIVE GOVERNMENTS OF OBTAINING ACCEPTANCE OF THEIR PROPOSAL BY THE SEUCIRYT COUNCIL AND OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES, MORE ONEROUS.

5. AS FAR AS THE ARREST OF CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS INSIDE NAMIBIA IS CONCERNED, IT SHOULD BE POINTED OUT THAT IN THE EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES PREVAILING IN SWA, THE ADMINISTRATOR-GENERAL DECIDED ON 18 APRIL 1978 TO TAKE STEPS TO CURB VIOLENCE IN THE TERRITORY. THESE STEPS WERE NOT AIMED AT ANY PARTICULAR POLITICAL PARTY BUT AT ACTS OF VIOLENCE. THESE ACTS WHICH INCLUDED THE BRUTAL SLAYING OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE DTA AND HERERO LEADER MR. CLEMENS KAPUUBO ON 27 MARCH 1978, HAD SHOWN AN ALARMING INCREASE WHICH WOULD CONSTITUTE A SERIOUS THREAT TO A FREE

AND OPEN POLITICAL PROCESS IN THE TERRITORY. THE MEASURES ADOPTED BY THE ADMINISTRATOR-GENERAL WERE AIMED, THEREFORE, AT BRINING ABOUT CONDITIONS INSIDE SWA WHICH WOULD FACILITATE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROPOSAL. THROUGH-OUT THE NEGOTIATIONS THE FIVE WESTERN POWERS AGREED THAT THE MAINTENANCE OF LAW AND ORDER AND SAFETY OF PERSONS AND PROPERTY SHOULD NOT BE JEOPARDIZED. THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT ASSUMES THAT THE FIVE STILL SHARE THIS CONCERN.

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NSCE-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 SSO-00 /073 W

-----072428 282001Z /66

O 281750Z JUN 78

FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 1535

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY GABORONE IMMEDIATE

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6. AS REGARDS THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE REGISTRATION OF VOTERS, THE FIVE WILL REMEMBER THAT THE FINAL AND DEFINITIVE VERSION OF THE PROPOSAL WAS SUBMITTED TO THE INTERESTED PARTIES THREE MONTHS AGO ON 30 MARCH 1978 AND WAS ACCEPTED BY SOUTH AFRICA ON 25 APRIL 1978. MOR THAN TWO MONTHS HAD NOW ELAPSED SINCE SOUTH AFRICA'S ACCEPTANCE. WE INDICATED TO THE FIVE AMBASSADORS ON 17 MAY THAT THEIR PROPOSAL COULD NOT HAVE COME AS A SURPRISE TO SWAPO AND OTHER PARTIES AS THEY WERE CONSULTED BY THE FIVE THROUGH-OUT THE YEAR-LONG DISCUSSIONS. IT COULD, THEREFORE, NOT BE CLAIMED THAT AN EXTENDED PERIOD WAS REQUIRED TO COME

TO A DECISION WHEN THE PROPOSAL WAS PRESENTED IN A FINAL AND DEFINITIVE FORM ON 30 MARCH THIS YEAR. REGISTRATION WOULD TAKE ABOUT THREE MONTHS AND IF WE WERE TO STAY AS CONFIDENTIAL

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CLOSELY AS POSSIBLE TO THE TARGET DATE FOR INDEPENDENCE, 31 DECEMBER 1978, THEN IT WAS ESSENTIAL THAT REGISTRATION SHOULD COMMENCE WITHOUT FURTHER DELAY. WE BELIEVE THAT THE FIVE WOULD AGREE WITH THE OBVIOUS NECESSITY OF MAINTAINING CREDIBILITY IN OUR COMMITMENT TO ACHIEVE A PEACEFUL SOLUTION FOR THE TERRITORY AND TO ACT IN GOOD FAITH IN THIS REGARD. THE INACTION IN THE DOMESTIC SITUATION IN SWA DEMANDS THE REMOVAL OF UNCERTAINTY AND DISPENDENCY WHICH MIGHT LEAD TO FRUSTRATING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROPOSAL. WE ALSO INFORMED THE FIVE THAT THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT CONSIDERED THE REGISTRATION OF VOTERS IN THE MAIN AS AN ESSENTIALLY NEUTRAL STEP OF AN ADMINISTRATIVE NATURE WHICH IS A NECESSARY PREREQUISITE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MAIN PURPOSE OF THE PROPOSAL. THE REGISTRATION OF VOTERS DOES NOT FAVOUR ANY POLITICAL PARTY OR VIEW. INDEED, THIS PRELIMINARY STEP WOULD FACILITATE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROPOSAL AND WOULD NOT RENDER IT NUGATORY OR CONTRADICT THE PROPOSAL. IT IS A CLEAR ACKNOWLEDGEMENT THAT THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT CONSIDERS ITSELF BOUND TO ACT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROPOSAL. THE PROVISIONS CONTAINED IN THE REGISTRATION PROCLAMATION ARE SUCH THAT THEY DO NOT EXCLUDE THE ROLE ENVISAGED FOR THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS. THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT REITERATES ITS INVITATION TO THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL TO PROCEED TO SWA TO SATISFY HIMSELF AS REGARDS THE REQUIREMENTS AND MACHINERY FOR REGISTRATION. THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT ONCE MORE EMPHASIZES THAT THE REGISTRATION PROCEDURE WILL BE IN ACCORDANCE WITH CLEARLY ESTABLISHED UNITED NATIONS PRACTICE IN PAST PLEBISCITES.

7. THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT IS DISMAYED AT THE NEGATIVE
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REACTION OF THE FIVE WESTERN COUNTRIES TO THE STEPS WHICH WERE TAKEN TO SAFEGUARD THE SECURITY OF THE TERRITORY AND ITS PEOPLE. WE URGE THE FIVE ONCE MORE TO TAKE ALL THE NECESSARY STEPS TO PERSUADE SWAPO TO CEASE ITS ACTS OF TERRORISM AGAINST THE CIVILIANS IN SWA.

8. ALL THE ELEMENTS WHICH FORMED THE BASIS OF SO MANY YEARS OF DISPUTE AND ACRIMONY BETWEEN SOUTH AFRICA AND THE UNITED NATIONS CAN NOW BE ELIMINATED. ALL WE ASK IS THAT THE PEOPLE NOW BE ALLOWED TO ELECT REPRESENTATIVES TO DECIDE A CONSTITUTION FOR THEIR COUNTRY IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE INDEPENDENCE PEACEFULLY UNDER CONDITIONS WHICH WILL ENABLE THE FUTURE INDEPENDENT GOVERNMENT OF THE TERRITORY TO MAINTAIN ORDER, STABILITY AND ECONOMIC WELL-BEING.

9. THE FIVE AMBASSADORS FURTHER INDICATED THAT FOLLOWING THE LUANDA MEETING THE FRONT-LINE PRESIDENTS INFORMED THE FIVE THAT THERE WERE ONLY TWO ISSUES STANDING IN THE WAY OF SWAPO'S ACCEPTANCE OF THEIR PROPOSAL, NAMELY, WALVIS BAY AND THE LOCATION OF THE RESIDUAL SOUTH AFRICAN FORCE. THEY ADDED THAT THE AFRICAN SIDE HAD ACCEPTED THAT WALVIS BAY "WILL BE DEALT WITH OUTSIDE THE CONTEXT OF THE PROPOSALS BY MEANS OF SUBSEQUENT NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN SOUTH AFRICA AND THE NEW GOVERNMENT OF NAMIBIA". NEVERTHELESS, THE AMBASSADORS ADDED THAT THEY CONSIDERED THAT IN ANY CONSIDERATION OF THE FIVE'S PROPOSAL BY THE SECURITY COUNCIL, "THE QUESTION OF WALVIS BAY WILL INEVITABLY ARISE AND WE SHALL HAVE TO STATE OUR POSITION".

10. THEY THEN CONCLUDED, AS WAS ALSO INDICATED IN THE FOREIGN MINISTERS' COMMUNICATION REFERRED TO IN THE FIRST PARAGRAPH THAT, IN ESSENCE, THEREFORE, ONLY ONE QUESTION, NAMELY THE LOCATION OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN RESIDUAL FORCES, SEPARATED US FROM FINAL AGREEMENT.

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11. THE AMBASSADORS INFORMED THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT THAT IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO BRIDGE WHAT WAS NOW DESCRIBED AS THE GAP, IF SOUTH AFRICA WOULD AGREE TO CONFINE ITS FORCES TO GROOTFONTEIN ONLY. THEY CONTENDED THAT THIS WOULD NOT REQUIRE AN ALTERATION OF THE PROPOSAL-SOMETHING WHICH THE FIVE THEMSELVES APPARENTLY WOULD NOT CONTEMPLATE.

12. IN THE OPINION OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT SUCH A CHANGE WOULD IN FACT AMOUNT TO A SUBSTANTIAL AMENDMENT OF THE PROPOSAL.

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NSCE-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 SSO-00 /073 W

-----072784 281959Z /66

O 281750Z JUN 78

FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 1536

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY GABORONE IMMEDIATE

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13. THE PROPOSAL OF THE FIVE GOVERNMENTS IS THE RESULT OF TWELVE MONTHS OF SERIOUS NEGOTIATIONS. WHILE ALL THE PROVISIONS OF THE PROPOSAL COULD OBVIOUSLY NOT SATISFY THE PREFERENCES OF EVERY PARTY, SOUTH AFRICA AFTER CONSULTATION WITH THE PEOPLE OF SOUTH WEST AFRICA, BENT OVER BACKWARDS TO BE AS ACCOMMODATING AS POSSIBLE. THE FINAL AND DEFINITIVE PRODUCT IS DELICATELY BALANCED AND CANNOT BE DISTURBED WITHOUT DISMANTLING THE PROPOSAL AS A WHOLE. WHEN THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT ACCEPTED THE FIVE'S PROPOSAL, ITS DECISION WAS BASED ON AN ASSURANCE THAT THE PROPOSAL WAS IN A FINAL AND DEFINITIVE FORM. THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE GOVERNMENT PRESENTED ITS ACCEPTANCE OF THE PROPOSAL ON THIS BASIS NOT ONLY TO THE PUBLIC BUT TO PARLIAMENT ITSELF. IF THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT
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WERE TO BECOME PARTY TO ANY AMENDMENT IN THE PROPOSAL, IT WOULD IN FACT MAKE ITSELF GUILTY OF HAVING MISLED NOT ONLY THE PEOPLE OF SOUTH WEST AFRICA BUT ALSO PARLIAMENT ITSELF.

14. IN REGARD TO WALVIS BAY THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT WISHES TO REMIND THE FIVE GOVERNMENTS THAT IN THE COURSE OF THE EARLIER DISCUSSIONS THE FIVE HAD AGREED THAT THE ISSUE OF WALVIS BAY WOULD NOT FORM PART OF THEIR PROPOSAL, BEING

A MATTER WHICH COULD FORM THE SUBJECT OF DISCUSSION ON A VOLUNTARY BASIS BETWEEN SOUTH AFRICAN AND THE NEW GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH WEST AFRICA. AFTER EXTENSIVE CONSULTATION THEY PRESENTED THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT WITH THE TEXT OF A STATEMENT WHICH THEY WOULD MAKE IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL IF THE NEED AROSE. THE TEXT AS FOLLOWS:

"THE FIVE NOTED CONFLICTING POSITIONS ON WALVIS BAY. WE ALSO NOTED THAT THE STRENGTH OF FORCES WOULD NOT BE INCREASED. ALSO THE FIVE CONSIDER THAT ALL ASPECTS OF THE QUESTION OF WALVIS BAY SHOULD BE SUBJECT TO DISCUSSION BETWEEN THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT AND THE FUTURE GOVERNMENT OF NAMIBIA. DURING THE TRANSITIONAL PROCESS THE FIVE WOULD EXPECT THAT PROVISIONS WOULD BE MADE TO ALLOW NAMIBIANS OF WALVIS BAY TO PARTICIPATE IN THE POLITICAL PROCESS DESCRIBED IN THE PROPOSAL".

15. THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT POINTED OUT THAT ONLY THE FOLLOWING SENTENCE WAS MATERIAL, I.E. "THE FIVE CONSIDER THAT ALL ASPECTS OF THE QUESTION OF WALVIS BAY SHOULD BE SUBJECT TO DISCUSSION BETWEEN THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT AND THE FUTURE GOVERNMENT OF NAMIBIA". THE FIVE, HOWEVER, INDICATED THAT THEY MIGHT HAVE TO USE THE WHOLE STATEMENT IF THIS BECAME NECESSARY. THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT EMPHASIZED THAT THE UNDERSTANDING IN REGARD

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TO THE HANDLING OF THE WALVIS BAY QUESTION WHICH HAD BEEN REACHED IN GOOD FAITH PLAYED A VERY IMPORTANT PART IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT'S ACCEPTANCE OF THE PROPOSAL OF THE FIVE. INDEED, THE SOUTH AFRICAN PRIME MINISTER INDICATED UNEQUIVOCALLY AT THE TIME THAT IF THERE WERE ANY ATTEMPT TO INTRODUCE THE WALVIS BAY ISSUE INTO THE PROPOSAL, OR TO TRY TO PREJUDGE ANY FUTURE DISCUSSIONS, HE WOULD HAVE HAD TO TERMINATE THE NEGOTIATIONS FORTHWITH. THE FIVE HAD REPEATEDLY ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THEY WERE AWARE OF THIS BASIC POSITION OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT.

16. THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT CONTINUES TO REGARD THE UNDERSTANDING ON WALVIS BAY AS AN IMPORTANT AND MATERIAL PART OF THE PROPOSAL AS A WHOLE, AND ASSUMES THAT THE FIVE WILL HANDLE THIS ISSUE IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL IN THE WAY THEY INDICATED TO US BEFORE OUR ACCEPTANCE OF THEIR PROPOSAL.

17. ALTHOUGH THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT REMAINS WILLING AND READY TO IMPLEMENT THE WESTERN PROPOSAL THE PEOPLE OF SOUTH WEST AFRICA ARE NOW ENTITLED TO DEMAND THAT THE TERRORISTS CEASE THEIR ACTS OF VIOLENCE. THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT AGAIN APPEAL TO THE FIVE WESTERN POWERS TO URGENTLY PILOT THEIR PROPOSAL THROUGH THE SECURITY COUNCIL. THE PEOPLE

OF THE TERRITORY ARE ENTITLED TO EMBARK ON AND TO CONCLUDE
THE PROCESS WHICH WILL LEAD TO INDEPENDENCE.

18. MOREOVER, ANY FURTHER DELAY WOULD MERELY SERVE TO ENCOURAGE
THOSE ELEMENTS WHO ARE NOT INTERESTED IN A PEACEFUL SETTLE-
MENT AND INDEPENDENCE BASED ON DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES, TO
EXPAND AND INTENSIFY THEIR VIOLENCE ON A BROAD FRONT.
THE WHOLE OF SOUTHERN AFRICA IS BEING THREATENED BY
INCREASING VIOLENCE INSTIGATED, FINANANCED AND PLANNED BY
FORCES FT. OUTSIDE THE AFRICAN CONTINENT. IT IS ESSENTIAL
THAT THE PEOPLES OF THE COUNTRIES OF SOUTHERN AFRICA WHO HAVE
NOT YET ACHIEVED INDEPENDENCE SHOULD BE GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITIY
TO EXERCISE THERI RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION FREELY,
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OPENLY AND RAPIDLY. IF THIS IS NOT DONE SOON, THE CONSEQUENCES
FOR ALL THE NATIONS OF SOUTHERN AFRICA MIGHT BECOME TOO DIRE
TO CONTEMPLATE.

PRETORIA 28 JUNE 1978
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TEXT, DEMARCHE, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978PRETOR03646
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: DC ALTERED PER 78 PRETORIA 3691
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780268-0009
Format: TEL
From: PRETORIA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780612/aaaaajri.tel
Line Count: 411
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 36354f7e-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 8
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 PRETORIA 3510
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2178764
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NAMIBIA: SAG RESPONSE TO DEMARCH OF JUNE 22
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Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/36354f7e-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014